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CIA 36073

17 July 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT: Remarks for IAC meeting 21 July 1950

REFERENCE: AIR FORCE's LETTER OF 10 JULY 1950 re "CRITICAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OBJECTIVES WITH RESPECT TO THE USSR"

1. This Defense List refers to Military Capabilities; the first three with Soviet air force and antiaircraft defense and the fourth with atomic weapons, to which latter some wanted to give an "overriding priority" a few weeks ago.
2. CIA, State, and AEC all have priority lists also. How about the Watch Committee List which indicates Intentions as well as Capabilities?
3. I think agreement can never be reached among the agencies on just whose priority should be first on a general list, i.e. absolute priorities, and that the NSC would not take on such a job. Priorities change. They are different in different localities. If the NSC should establish rigid priorities, every time something new came up it would have to go to them instead of direct to the Collectors.
4. I think that CIA with IAC concurrence could issue a list of critical objectives to all of the collecting agencies, but we would have to depend upon their capabilities for the collection and for determining locally the priorities. They are naturally more interested in their own fields of dominant interest. They would do the best they could but would not pass up information on the 6th or 8th item which they might be able to collect merely because they could not get data on the 4th and were exerting all their efforts on that item.
5. They are doing their best now in accordance with their standing and special instructions. A list such as this could NOT determine order of priority but could point up the general importance of these subjects if this group thinks such emphasis is necessary in addition to the instructions which have already been issued.

PRESCOOT CHILDS, Chief
Coordination, Operations
and Policy Staff

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